

27 June 2018

Letter to the editor – Friarsgate and Tempest Ford

In response to Lichfield Mercury

Dear Sir,

We fully understand and sympathise with Mr Whiting's frustrations that Tempest Ford ceased trading and yet development of the Birmingham Road site will no longer progress as expected.

However, we think it is important to explain the lead up to the closure of Tempest Ford and the links to the planned Friarsgate development.

Tempest Ford only ever had a temporary lease on the Birmingham Road garage. The management team were made aware that the site was earmarked for development when they took on the lease.

As the lease was temporary, the team knew they would need to relocate their business at some point, and that we would have released them from their lease with no penalty.

As the plans for Friarsgate developed, a team at the council worked closely with Tempest Ford to help them find a new site. As part of this the council granted planning consent for a new car dealership and showroom on the former Naturana site at Eastern Avenue in 2017.

While we gave notice for the garage to relocate in May 2017, we explained that if Tempest Ford could put together a viable relocation plan, we would have continued to support to help them make a positive move.

We were surprised and disappointed that the team chose not progress the opportunity to move to the new site, and instead closed their business.

Although it is disappointing that the site will no longer be developed as originally planned, I would like to reassure Mr Whiting that we fully intend to regenerate it in a way that better meets the needs of our community and will be involving local people every step of the way.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Mike Wilcox
Leader of Lichfield District Council

Approved by Richard King & Mike Wilcox by email

